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Air Force Core Competency: Global Attack
What It Means To Operational Commanders


by

Craig H. Fisher

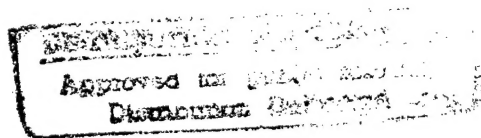
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Dave Della Volpe, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

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15. ABSTRACT: CHANGES IN THE GLOBAL THREAT COUPLED WITH FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC PRESSURES HAVE RESULTED IN SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN THE FORCE STRUCTURE AND FORWARD BASES. THESE REDUCTIONS REQUIRE OPERATIONAL CINCS TO RELY ON FORCES FROM OUTSIDE OF THEIR THEATER TO MEET THEIR MILITARY REQUIREMENTS. TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS AND THE CORRECT APPLICATION OF AIR FORCES WERE COMBAT TESTED DURING OPERATION DESERT STORM. AIR POWER EMERGED FROM OPERATION DESERT STORM AS A DECISIVE FORCE, FINALLY WAS ABLE TO MEET THE DREAMS OF EARLY AIR POWER ADVOCATES. TO PROVIDE A TRUE GLOBAL ATTACK CAPABILITY, THE USAF RELIES ON FIGHTER AND BOMBER FORCES. THE FIGHTER FORCES ARE CURRENTLY ORGANIZED THREE WAYS TO PROVIDE A CINC THE CORRECT COMBINATION OF FORCES. ALTHOUGH THE FIGHTER WING IS THE PRIMARY FIGHTING FORCE OF THE USAF, IT IS NOT ALWAYS FLEXIBLE ENOUGH. THE COMPOSITE WING PROVIDES A "CANNED" AIR FORCE WITH ALL THE REQUIRED ASSETS UNDER A SINGLE COMMANDER TO CONDUCT AIR OPERATIONS WITHOUT RELYING ON COMPLEX C2 TO COORDINATE THE EFFORT. WHEN A CINC NEEDS A FORCE POSSESSING SPECIFIC CAPABILITIES, THE AIR EXPEDITIONARY FORCE IS THE METHOD TO PROVIDE A TAILORED FORCE. RECENT UPGRADES MAKE THE BOMBER FORCE UNIQUELY CAPABLE OF CONDUCTING LONG RANGE PRECISION STRIKES WITHIN HOURS OF NOTIFICATION. THESE ASSETS WILL MOST LIKELY BE EMPLOYED IN COMBINATION OR INDIVIDUALLY IN ONE OF THREE MILITARY RESPONSES: A SHOW OF FORCE, SELECTIVE AIR STRIKE, OR AN INTERVENTION. THE USAF CORE COMPETENCY OF GLOBAL ATTACK CAN PROVIDES CINCS A RAPID AND DECISIVE MILITARY FORCE CAPABLE OF DETERRING, DELAYING, AND DEFEATING AN ENEMY FORCE.			
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ABSTRACT

Air Force Core Competency: Global Attack. What it means to Operational Commanders.

Changes in the global threat coupled with foreign and domestic pressures have resulted in a significant reductions in the force structure and forward bases. These reductions require operational CINCs to rely on forces from outside of their theater to meet their military requirements.

Technological advancements and the correct application of air forces were combat tested during Operation DESERT STORM. Air power emerged from Operation DESERT STORM as a decisive force, finally able to meet the dreams of early air power advocates.

To provide a true global attack capability, the USAF relies on fighter and bomber forces. The fighter forces are currently organized four ways to provide a CINC the correct combination of forces. Although the fighter wing is the primary fighting force of the USAF, it is not always flexible enough. The composite wing provides a "canned" air force with all the required assets under a single commander to conduct air operations without relying on complex C2 to coordinate the effort. When a CINC needs a force possessing specific capabilities, the air expeditionary force is the method to provide a tailored force. Recent upgrades make the bomber force uniquely capable of conducting long range precision strikes within hours of notification. These assets will most likely be employed in combination or individually in one of three military responses: a show of force, selective air strike, or an intervention.

The USAF core competency of *Global Attack* provides CINCS a rapid and decisive military force capable of deterring, delaying, and defeating an enemy force.

PREFACE

Significant portions of the source material were focused on proving that one or another branch of the armed service, or forces within a service branch, was more capable and therefore concluded that it should receive a proportionally larger portion of the Department of Defense budget and/or undergo fewer reductions of its force structure. It is not the intent of this paper to present an argument on force structure or apportionment of the DOD budget in favor of a particular service branch within the US Armed Forces (Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine). It is also not the intent to justify a force structure within the Air Force between the major combatant branches; bomber versus fighter. The intent is to focus on air forces as a "tool" currently available to regional CINCs to counter an adversary in the defense of US national interests, as determined by proper authority (President, NCA, CJCS, etc.). The issue of how the US Armed Forces, including the Air Force, will be structured for the future will be decided during the 1997 BUR.

INTRODUCTION

Changes in the global environment and the maturity of air power require the United States Air Force (USAF) to update its doctrine and enlighten the key decision makers (NCA, CINCs, CJTF) on the unique capabilities that air forces offer CINCs in defense of the United States' national interests. These changes initiated a process to update the way U.S. Armed Forces are going to fight future conflicts. This process is embodied in Joint Vision 2010 and is the foundation that the USAF used in building its new vision, "Global Engagement: A Vision for the 21st Century Air Force".

This vision aligns with Joint Vision 2010 and builds on both the advancements in technology and the lessons of past conflicts.¹ General Ronald R. Fogleman, the Air Force Chief of Staff, stated that the USAF will focus its efforts in air and space power to maintain the six "core competencies" of: Air and Space Superiority, Global Attack, Rapid Global Mobility, Precision Engagement, Information Superiority, and Agile Combat Support.² What this means to an operational CINC is that the USAF can today provide a decisive military force that can provide a truly *global attack* capability. This global attack core competency provides CINCs, or commanders of Joint Task Forces (CJTF), the capability to attack rapidly anywhere on the globe in support of National Command Authority (NCA) tasking. This is even more critical in today's environment of reduced Armed Forces. Before deciding how a CINC should apply this USAF global attack capability, the feasibility of air forces to conduct global attack must first be analyzed. This assessment will look at how changes in the threat environment have influenced a proportional reduction of the military force structure, the emergence of air power as a decisive force in conventional combat, and how the USAF organizes its major assets have changed way the USAF will accomplish a CINC's military objectives.

BACKGROUND

In the current environment of reduced forces and forward basing, global attack is one very special "tool" a CINC, CJTF, or Joint Force Air Component Commander (supporting the

CINC's and CJTF's objectives) must consider in responding to situations requiring military force. This "tool" possesses the unique ability of air forces to attack rapidly, anywhere on the globe, at anytime.³

There are several ways to apply air forces to meet this global attack competency. The three primary methods include a direct strike from Continental United States (CONUS) using long range bombers, rapid deployment of air forces to a forward operating location to conduct in-theater air operations, or a balanced combination of both.

Air power has been evolving through developments in technology, but not until recently has it all come together to meet the dreams of early air power advocates (Douhet, Mitchell, Trenchard). Advancements in technology have led to the introduction of a modern network that melds command, control, communication, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR), stealth, and precision munitions (PGMs) to produce a synergistic effect in air power. This combination has enabled air power to make a significant and decisive impact on the battlefield. DESERT STORM not only demonstrated just how decisive air power is when properly employed, but also highlighted air power as a valuable tool for combat commanders. In an era of reduced military forces and reduced forward bases, it is critical to find a method to compensate for these reductions if the U.S. is to continue to use a military response in support of U.S. national interests. Global attack is a unique capability the USAF provides to fill the growing military void in every CINC's theater.

ENVIRONMENT

The basic concept of the military is to deter and if deterrence fails to fight and win decisively. During the bi-polar, Cold War period a key component of the U.S. strategy was based upon forward defense. This strategy was to deter and if that failed to immediately engage Soviet forces at the border.⁴ To accomplish this mission, forward basing of a large military force was essential. When the Cold War ended, the threat shifted from a clearly identified singular global threat to less easily defined regional threats and a massive forward defense was no longer the appropriate strategy.⁵ The United States military, and the Air Force

in this case, is no longer faced with the massive forces of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact but instead must prepare for numerous, but smaller, adversaries. Thus, this lack of a clearly identified single global threat began a process of military force reduction driven by both foreign and domestic pressures.

The foreign pressure comes from governments that host U.S. forces. Foreign public concern and dissatisfaction over the presence of U.S. troops and bases, coupled with a lack of a clear threat, have resulted in these government's refusal to renew U.S. basing rights or in some cases a call for a reduction in U.S. troops. The loss of bases in Spain and the Philippines is an example of how a foreign government's assessment of the situation has led to the conclusion that U.S. bases are no longer in its country's best interest.

The domestic pressure stems from the American people's historical dislike of a large standing armed force during times of peace and an unwillingness to finance a robust military force following a war. Following the Cold War, like the demobilization after both World Wars, Korea, and Vietnam, the American people have placed renewed pressure to reduce the military force. Adding to this traditional aversion for a large standing armed force, the American people are placing increased pressure on the American Congress to balance the U.S. budget. This financial concern has made the military a prime target for budget cuts. Thus, a lack of a clear global enemy and a need to reduce spending has led to a reduced force structure and foreign and domestic base closures.

The impact that this reduction of forces is having on a CINC is a greatly reduced in-theater force that is immediately available for deterrence and combat operations. Not only are in-theater forces reduced but these forces are increasingly being committed to numerous military operations, such as Bosnia and SOUTHERN WATCH, which can quickly use up a CINC's limited forces. Yet, despite the lack of a clearly defined enemy, the U.S. Armed Forces finds itself "...involved in more operations of greater duration than at any time in the past 20 years; and, these operations have been conducted with 25 percent of the total force and 40 percent fewer forward deployed forces than the Services possessed in 1989."⁶ A CINC

must now rely on his forces being augmented with forces from the CONUS, or from sea-based assets, to build an adequate force in both size and diversity to accomplish most missions.

The lack of in-theater ground forces and the long time necessary to move such forces require that CINCs consider air forces to meet their immediate crisis needs. While the Air Force has also significantly reduced its forward based assets (from 30 wings in the European theater in 1987 to 6 wings in 1996)⁷ its global attack capability can still provide the CINC a military force in mere hours. While the Navy can also provide a rapid reaction force when in the region, the USAF's global attack can provide the CINC additional forces in mere hours to either augment a carrier group or provide the sole force when no other force is in the immediate region.

AIR POWER: A DECISIVE ASSET

Early advocates of air power envisioned a force that could do everything. In short, it would make wars on the land and sea obsolete. This historically has not been the case, since the theory and doctrine of these early advocates were well ahead of capability. The process of identifying key targets, locating them, and destroying them with a reasonable certainty in an acceptable time frame was not yet available. Not until DESERT STORM was air power's decisive nature fully achieved, combat tested, and subsequently recognized.

Operation DESERT STORM became the proving ground for air power. The advancements in technology and willingness of U.S. leadership to fully and properly apply air forces in a concerted effort against an enemy were not fully appreciated until post-conflict assessments of air forces role in DESERT STORM. The unprecedented magnitude of air power's contribution in operation DESERT STORM was :

"In 39 days, airpower grounded the Iraqi Air Force and systematically stripped the Iraqi Army of its combat power – enabling the fastest land offensive of the 20th Century. Airpower technology caught up with airpower theory in Southwest Asia. Air and space forces achieved a degree of effectiveness that earlier airpower pioneers foresaw, but which the technology of their day could not yet deliver. The air

*campaign paralyzed Iraq's capability to wage war, achieving effects that simply were not within the scope of earlier campaigns. In several categories from air defense to oil production, the 1991 air campaign produced effects on a greater scale than did the Combined Bomber Offensive in two and a half years of costly strikes on Nazi Germany."*⁸

The USAF's ability to combine technological advancements in C4ISR, Stealth, and PGMs has revolutionized the effects of air power by shortening both the time and sorties required to locate and destroy targets and provided the key ingredient that made air power decisive in DESERT STORM.⁹

C4ISR is a complex but critical structure that enables air forces to hit the "correct" target. To accomplish this, support agencies must begin a process to identify and locate critical target(s), communicate the information to the air assets that are to attack the site, analyze post attack damage, and assess the next target. The modernization of the C4ISR system and ability to connect with resources from anywhere in the world now allows deployed air assets to operate with real-time information from off-station sources resulting in a drastic reduction of support assets. This is essential in the feasibility of the Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) and composite wings to rapidly deploy to a forward operating base and conduct air operations without huge logistical and support organizations.

Another way the USAF can compensate for a reduced force structure and still provide a versatile tool capable of global attack with surgical precision is through stealth platforms. Stealth provides an ability to strike anywhere in an enemy's country without requiring a linear attack sequence or large support packages to "blow a hole" through the enemy's air defenses to get to the target. Instead, stealth aircraft can bypass these threats and attack just the targets

required to accomplish the strategic objective or can be used tactically to open a door for additional non-stealth assets.

The advances in C4ISR and stealth can only be useful in target destruction if the bomb hits the target. Precision munitions provided the final ingredient in air power's decisive debut in DESERT STORM. Precision munitions' ability to destroy a target in a single mission dramatically reduced the quantity of both strike aircraft and total number of bombs required for each target. This quantum leap in air power's ability to destroy a target quickly with greatly reduced air assets is shown in the below comparison of the bombs and sorties required to destroy a 60 ft by 100 ft target in WW II, Vietnam, and DESERT STORM.¹⁰

Year and Conflict	Number and Aircraft	Number of 2000# Bombs	Circular Error Probability (CEP) "Miss Distance"
1943 WW II	1500 B-17	9000	3300ft CEP
1970 Vietnam	44-88 F-4	176	400ft CEP
1991- DESERT STORM	1 F-117	1 Precision Munition	10ft CEP

The reduction in numbers of sorties achieved through technological advances is critical to the Air Force's successful implementation of global attack. A small, highly lethal package can now accomplish what previously took a squadron months/weeks to accomplish. One additional benefit of precision munitions is the reduction of total munitions required. Such a reduction of required munitions, reduces the burden of a robust supply line and further adds to the feasibility of rapid deployment to a forward base to accomplish global attack since the munitions to support combat operations can rapidly be air delivered until the slower land and sea lift is able to provide this critical supply.

In DESERT STORM, air power destroyed Iraq's basic ability to wage war. The Iraqi ground forces suffered such heavy damage as to cripple their operational effectiveness.¹¹ The

role of air and space forces are part of a new form of combat where, "it will no longer be necessary to close with the enemy in order to destroy him."¹² Airpower was so decisive in DESERT STORM that it has even been suggested that in future conflicts, air forces could augment a smaller ground force, perhaps not even a U.S. force, and defeat the enemy thus meeting the CINC's and U.S. objectives with significantly fewer forces. As a minimum, the success of air power in DESERT STORM so revolutionized the conduct of war that General Colin Powel said: "I will say this – and I've said it before and I'll say it again: airpower was decisive in that war."¹³ This means that air power can be the right force to meet the CINC's needs without a large and prolonged build-up of forces.

THE TOOLS

In response to a CINC's need for additional forces, the USAF offers at least three ways that capitalize on air power's proven ability to fulfill the requirements of global attack. These three methods are composed of a mixture of both physical assets and a new organizational structure to improve efficiency. The physical assets include fighter aircraft and long-range bombers employing precision (and conventional) munitions and the associated direct support aircraft (AWACS, air superiority, tankers, electronic warfare aircraft, etc...). The new organizational structure focuses on how these forces can be deployed and employed in the quickest and most efficient manner.

The fighter wing is the core fighting unit in the Air Force. It has historically been built around a single type of aircraft and can be deployed within two days of notification. One significant limitation of this method is that such wings are optimized for a very specific mission and therefore several different wings are usually required to achieve the necessary

force mixture before commencing air operations. These additional wings bring the direct support assets of air superiority, tankers, AWACS, electronic warfare, SEAD, etc... that are required to conduct air operations against a modern and determined adversary. Upon arrival of these wings, a detailed and sophisticated C2 apparatus must be implemented to coordinate these different units' activities to achieve a unity of effort in air operations necessary in accomplishing the mission.¹⁴ The problem of this traditional method is that it requires valuable time to set up and so the Air Force has begun a test of a "new" concept of peacetime composite wings and the AEF to reduce the time from notification by the NCA to "boots on target."

In the past, U.S. contingency plans were based on deploying air forces to forward bases. To incorporate all the air assets into the daily air operation to achieve the commander's objectives, a detailed Air Tasking Order (ATO) was required to coordinate the separate air forces to achieve the objective and apply the principles of war. This detailed ATO process typically operates on a 72 hour cycle. Unfortunately, this long process slows down the very unique aspect of air power's ability to quickly concentrate forces and reduces a CINC's flexibility to immediately apply air power.

The "new" solution to this problem, gave re-birth to the composite wing concept that was originally founded in WW II. This concept creates a wing in CONUS that has all the resources needed to conduct air operations based at one location under a single commander.¹⁵ By applying the basic aerospace tenet of centralized control/decentralized execution,¹⁶ this unit is then tasked with "mission type" orders to accomplish a broad task in support of the JTF

Commander's objectives. The composite wing commander can then optimize his forces to accomplish the mission.

The benefits of composite wings are numerous, but the most significant is the building of a single unit with the necessary assets to conduct rapid air operation without a cumbersome C2 structure that operates in peacetime as it will in war. The composite wing structure is not always the only or even the best answer, but in operations short of a major regional conflict (MRC) it can be very efficient. Lieutenant Colonel Dan Scholer, Commander 81st Fighter Squadron, who flew F-4Gs in a traditional style wing from Bahrain said of wing organization in DESERT STORM:

"It is difficult to say which is better. It depends on the actual activity. For an operation the scale of DESERT STORM, I think it might have been difficult to work as a composite wing because there were so many hundreds of aircraft from different units involved. ...However, for smaller-scale operations and contingency operations- lower threat operations- the composite wing works very, very well. That is because you have one commander in charge of, and controlling many different assets so he can tailor those assets on a day-to-day basis, even on an hour-to-hour basis for the exact mission that day"¹⁷

As a CINC reviews his theater of operation, he often identifies situation(s) that require a military force with specific capabilities. The AEF was designed to meet a regional CINC's need to provide just such a tailored air force to a forward location with minimal notice. Although the AEF is similar in structure to the composite wing, its composition of assets is not fixed and provides an operational level force structure tailored to meet a CINC's needs and objectives.¹⁸ While the composite wing provides a 'canned' package that is pre-determined, "The AEF has the capability to mix and match the types of operational aircraft and support assets that are needed in the theater. The benefits include another option for the CINC to exercise and the added value of the presence mission in an ally's country."¹⁹ The effectiveness of the AEF was demonstrated in October 1994, at the end of operation

VIGILANT WARRIOR, when Saddam Husein withdrew his forces in an apparent response to the rapid U.S. deployment.²⁰

By definition the AEF is a Joint Task Force whose mission is to conduct combat air operations from forward bases, "and serve as an air bridgehead for other forces to follow, should such a force be necessary."²¹ Since there are now fewer overseas bases and fewer forces, the U.S. and specifically the Air Force must be able to project power from the CONUS to meet the CINC's immediate combat needs.²² The AEF is just such a means for Air Force units to provide regional CINC's a flexible force tailored to provide air and space capabilities.²³ AEFs have been used to provide a CINC additional in-theater forces in time of heightened tensions and as the primary force when a Navy carrier battle group was not available in the CENTCOM AOR.²⁴

One issue frequently cited by critics of land-based air forces is that they are dependent on a forward base to operate from. There are two considerations to counter this argument. First, as was stated by General (Ret) Russell E. Dougherty before the Defense Policy Panel, is that "when the interest of allies are threatened and this type of sustained combat is required. I opine that shared basing will be made available—and our fighter forces can deploy to these bases within hours."²⁵ In other words if it is significant for the U.S. to send large numbers of forces to accomplish the mission, it is not just in U.S. interest alone. The second consideration is the U.S. bomber force's capability to operate from locations outside of the local theater, to include the CONUS if required.

Long-range bombers offer a unique capability to strike targets immediately and offer the CINC an air asset that can immediately be used. Unfortunately, like all sections of the military, the bomber force has undergone a significant reduction from the 360 bombers the Air Force had in 1989 at the end of the Cold War.²⁶ Of the surviving bombers, 66 are in dedicated "nuclear withhold" leaving approximately 100 bombers to support a CINC's conventional conflict.²⁷ Unfortunately, CINCs currently plan on using fewer bombers than are available in current plans.²⁸ This is due to two reasons. Primarily, they have limited

conventional capabilities; especially the lack of a precision munitions employment capability. This is rapidly changing thru the modernization of the bomber force, acquisition of new precision weapons and platforms (B-2 with both stealth and PGM capability), and the willingness of USAF leaders to use the bomber force in an interdiction role. Senior USAF leaders recognize the role bombers can play in an interdiction mission and is reflected in the inclusion of "[m]assed conventional forces of an adversary threatening or invading a friendly state" as specific targets in the new B-2 bomber's mission.²⁹ The second reason is that the bombers lack persistence when deployed from the CONUS, since the time between each sortie can take up to a day. The solution to reduce the time between sorties, increase persistence, and increase flexibility requires the bomber to be deployed closer to the theater of operations. However, a CINC will not usually sacrifice airlift space to forward deploy bombers, but will instead accept lower sortie generation rates from the bombers operating from their home station.³⁰ Although this use of bombers is often considered controversial, it is a role that only bombers can routinely accomplish from the CONUS. The fact remains, that at the onset of a crisis requiring immediate combat power, the bomber can deliver within hours. This capability should be incorporated into the CINC's bag of tools as a valuable asset to use.

THE APPLICATION OF GLOBAL ATTACK

Regional CINCs are now faced with the problem of just which forces to use and how to use them while considering a time factor of how long until meaningful military operations can commence. This time factor is especially critical in the opening hours/days of a conflict. Colonel John Warden identifies the critical nature that time plays in a crisis when he stated that "as time progresses, the likelihood of achieving your objectives decreases, while the potential for casualties and collateral damage increases."³¹ Thus, a rapid reaction is mandatory to fight in the American tradition of fast and decisive victory with low casualties.

In assessing how air power can support his warfighting needs, a CINC must consider the objective of these forces. The USAF global attack capability offers the CINC three

distinct types of *power projection*³²: intervention, global air strike, and show of force.^a These types of power projection are easiest to associate as different levels of response; with intervention being the highest, an air strike the next, and a show of force the lowest levels of operations requiring *combat* air forces. This concept does not always equate to the actual size or scope of the air operations. Some examples of each are:

Intervention: Large military force over an extended period of time
Grenada, Panama, or DESERT STORM.

Air Strike: A selective strike(s) of short duration
Operation ELDORADO CANYON, 1986: which was carried out for punitive reasons and deter future Libyan sponsored terrorist activities.

Show of Force: A capability demonstrating resolve and intent
Philippine Coup attempt, 1989: the launch of F-4 Phantoms to orbit Manila thus safeguarding Philippine democracy
Korea DMZ Tree Cutting Incident, August 1976: when two officers were killed by North Koreans, 55 fighter aircraft were deployed to the area from the U.S. and Japan within 48 hours. At the same time, B-52s from Guam flew missions over South Korea intentionally visible to North Korean radar.³³

When a CINC is faced with a crisis situation requiring a military response, he will conduct a Commanders Estimate of the Situation (CES) to help determine a course of action. In this process, the CINC and his staff analyze several options and compare them against possible enemy courses of action. The first step in determining the military response is to determine if adequate military forces are already available in the theater of operation. If this is true, then he may not use the full global attack capability of the USAF but may still choose to augment his in-place forces. It is when he does not have adequate forces available to meet his objectives compounded with a critical time factor, that Air Force's global attack competency is of vital interest to him.

When the situation is not of a crisis nature, it follows that there is usually adequate time available to move forces into the theater. However, the CINCs are frequently faced with

^a Col Meilinger identifies five distinct types of power projection, but only the three listed are essential to this paper. The other two are: Surveillance/reconnaissance/C3I and peaceful assistance.

a crisis, still short of open hostilities, that require the immediate presence of military forces. During this time frame, the USAF can respond within hours and provide the CINC combat air forces. This package may augment assets already in place, or operate independent of other in-theater forces. The choice of an AEF or composite wing will usually be based upon the adequacy of current composite wings to accomplish the mission and a time factor to activate an AEF. The arrival of these forces will provide both a show of force and a credible military force to conduct air operations if the show of force does not deter the enemy.

The next level of response is a selective strike to achieve a specific and limited objective. This strike can attack from long range within hours of notification. The most likely asset for such a strike is a bomber, since it alone possesses the unique capability to routinely fly long-range missions to strike a target. If the range is not excessive, fighter aircraft can also conduct such a mission, but will require a significantly larger tanker support force for air refueling. Again, with time as a driving factor, it is also possible to deploy fighter forces to forward bases and then conduct a strike. If the forces are deployed from the CONUS to the theater of operations and then used for a strike, the total time elapsed is likely to be between 3-5 days. If the CINC had already deployed forces, such as an AEF, in a show of force, he may have fighter assets available to him that he did not have at the beginning of the crisis.

The largest response is an interdiction. During the initial phase, the bomber force from the CONUS and AEF already in the theater can provide the first line of defense until additional fighter forces are deployed into the theater. These first forces deployed are likely composite wings deployed within hours of a CINC's request. Once adequate forces are available, the CINC now has an offensive option to counter the enemy. This is similar to the massive build-up of forces in DESERT STORM.

However, as is frequently pointed out, the next conflict may not have a cooperative enemy that patiently waits while armed forces are deployed against him. In this case, the CINC may begin combat air operations using the full spectrum of the USAF's global attack. A combination of a selective strike and a full intervention is available to the CINC to

stop an enemy aggression in progress. This uses both the long range capability of the bomber force and any fighter forces within range to begin combat operations to deter further aggression, destroy advancing forces, and/or begin destruction of his warmaking capability and centers of gravity. This contribution of the bomber force to the CINC was stated in the Air Force Bomber Roadmap as:

*"...[B]ombers will provide the majority of the firepower during the initial and sustained operations phases of major regional conflicts. From bases in the United States, the Air Force expects the Bombers to fly long duration, round-trip missions of up to 36 hours to make initial attacks within 24 hours of being tasked. Within a few days of the start of a conventional conflict, bombers will be expected to deploy to forward locations for sustained operations, flying shorter and more frequent missions. The goal of the bomber missions will be to halt invading enemy armored forces and disrupt the enemy's ability to wage war by attacking time-critical targets quickly, using a combination of direct attack and standoff munitions. Some bombers deployed to a major regional conflict will be expected to swing to a second regional conflict if needed."*³⁴

CONCLUSION

Advancements in technology and combat testing of Air Force Doctrine have proven air power to be a decisive military force. The recent maturity of air power was dramatically seen in DESERT STORM and has proven that air power possesses a decisive capability. With this understanding and a recognition of air forces' ability to attack anywhere on the globe, the Air Force has articulated a vision for the 21st Century Air Force that applies new doctrinal and organizational concepts to provide forces to regional CINCs that possesses a truly *global attack* capability. Thus, the unique qualities of speed, range, and flexibility inherent of air forces enable the USAF to respond to a CINC and rapidly apply combat power within hours.³⁵ This ability is available now for a CINC to use to meet his military force requirements in his region. "This ability rapidly to project power, as well as the ability of Air Forces readily to adapt to changing circumstances and environments, will undoubtedly become increasingly important as forward area basing becomes more limited and constrained."³⁶ Global attack is one of the USAF's contribution to national defense by

providing a CINC a military force to deter, delay, or defeat an adversary in support of his military objectives.

There are shortfalls that will have to be addressed or worked through to optimize air power's lethality. The bomber force is a critical tool that bridges the time until additional fighter forces arrive in the theater and will most likely become more critical as force reductions continue. Thus, bombers conducting interdiction air strikes should be incorporated into CINCs' plans to provide an immediate global strike option. It is not always possible to "do more with less", but the Air Force can immediately provide a credible force to a CINC in a crisis. Global attack is an Air Force capability that is available today and into the 21st Century.

NOTES

¹ Dave DellaVolpe, "United States Air Force; Employing Aerospace Power," Lecture, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 26 November 1996, Slide 18

² Steven Watkins, "Core Competencies," Air Force Times, 2 December 1996, 13.

³ Steven Watkins, "Core Competencies," Air Force Times, 2 December 1996. 13.

⁴ Department of The Air Force, Global Presence 1995,(n.p.:n.d.), 4.

⁵ United States General Accounting Office, U.S. Combat Power. Reassessing Plans to Modernize Interdiction Capabilities Could Save Billions, Report to the Subcommittee on Readiness, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives. (Washington: May 1996), GAO/NSIAD-96-72. 4.

⁶ Department of The Air Force, Global Presence 1995,(n.p.:n.d.), 5.

⁷ Department of The Air Force, Global Presence 1995,(n.p.:n.d.), 5

⁸ Department of the Air Force, Global Reach Global Power The Evolving Air Force Contribution to National Security, (n.p.: December 1992), 11.

⁹ Department of the Air Force, Global Reach Global Power The Evolving Air Force Contribution to National Security, (n.p.: December 1992), 11.

¹⁰ Department of the Air Force, Global Reach Global Power The Evolving Air Force Contribution to National Security, (n.p.: December 1992), 12.

¹¹ Department of the Air Force, Global Reach Global Power The Evolving Air Force Contribution to National Security, (n.p.: December 1992), 12.

¹² Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff David Jeremiah, quoted in Department of the Air Force, Global Reach Global Power The Evolving Air Force Contribution to National Security, (n.p.:December 1992), 12.

¹³ General Colin Powel, Quoted in Department of the Air Force, Global Reach Global Power The Evolving Air Force Contribution to National Security, (n.p.:December 1992), 11.

¹⁴ Merrill A McPeak, "For The Composite Wing," Air Power Journal, Fall 1990, 5-6.

¹⁵ Merrill A McPeak, "For The Composite Wing," Air Power Journal, Fall 1990, 8

¹⁶ Air Force Manual 1-1. Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force. Volume 1. (Washington D.C. : U.S. Govt. Print. Off., March 1992), 8.

¹⁷ "Second Gulf War Yields Model for Future," International Defense Review , no. 6, 1993, 459.

¹⁸ Phillip S. Meilinger, "The Air Expeditionary Force", Unpublished Talking Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I.: n.d. 1.

¹⁹ Dave DellaVolpe, "United States Air Force; Employing Aerospace Power," Lecture, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 26 November 1996, Slide 23.

²⁰ Eric Robinson "Jumper talks about AEF Concept," Air Force News Service, 10 May 1996 #960446. 1

²¹ Phillip S. Meilinger, "The Air Expeditionary Force", Unpublished Talking Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I.: n.d.1.

²² Phillip S. Meilinger, "The Air Expeditionary Force", Unpublished Talking Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I.: n.d.1.

²³ Dave DellaVolpe, "United States Air Force; Employing Aerospace Power," Lecture, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 26 November 1996, Slide 23.

²⁴ Dave DellaVolpe, "United States Air Force; Employing Aerospace Power," Lecture, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 26 November 1996, Slide 23.

²⁵ Russell E. Dougherty, "Statements" Defense Policy Panel, House Armed Services Committee, Projecting Power Without Forward Bases, (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 27 March 1990), 6.

²⁶ U.S. General Accounting Office, Air Force Bombers, Options to Retire or Restructure the Force Would Reduce Planned Spending, Report to the Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives (Washington: September 1996), GAO/NSIAD-96-192. 2.

²⁷ U.S. General Accounting Office, Air Force Bombers, Options to Retire or Restructure the Force Would Reduce Planned Spending, Report to the Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives (Washington: September 1996), GAO/NSIAD-96-192. 33.

²⁸ U.S. General Accounting Office, Air Force Bombers, Options to Retire or Restructure the Force Would Reduce Planned Spending, Report to the Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives (Washington: September 1996), GAO/NSIAD-96-192. 35.

²⁹ General Colin Powell, Quoted in Department of the Air Force, Global Reach Global Power The Evolving Air Force Contribution to National Security, (n.p.:December 1992), 6.

²⁸ U.S. General Accounting Office, Air Force Bombers, Options to Retire or Restructure the Force Would Reduce Planned Spending, Report to the Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives (Washington: September 1996), GAO/NSIAD-96-192. 36.

³¹ John Warden, quoted in Ronald L. McGonigle, "Air Force Composite Wings-Future Success or Failure?" Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. School of Advanced Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth Kansas: 1993. 23.

³² Phillip S. Meilinger, "The Air Force and Power Projection," Unpublished Talking Paper. Unknown: 11 April 1990. 1.

³³ Richard G Head, Frisco W. Short and Robert C. McFarlane, Crisis Resolution: Presidential Decision Making in the Mayaguez and Korean Confrontations (Boulder: Westview Press, 1978 ,quoted in Phillip S. Meilinger, "The Air Force and Power Projection." Unpublished Talking Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I.: 11 April 1990. 2.

³⁴ U.S. General Accounting Office, Air Force Bombers, Options to Retire or Restructure the Force Would Reduce Planned Spending, Report to the Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives (Washington: September 1996), GAO/NSIAD-96-192. 24.

³⁵ Russell E. Dougherty, "Statements" Defense Policy Panel, House Armed Services Committee, Projecting Power Without Forward Bases, (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 27 March 1990), 6.

³⁶ Russell E. Dougherty, "Statements" Defense Policy Panel, House Armed Services Committee, Projecting Power Without Forward Bases, (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 27 March 1990), 6.

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